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IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously Presented) A tarnish inhibiting composition consisting essentially of a substantially non-hydrolyzable polymer having substantially homogeneously dispersed therein from about 0.01% to 5% by weight of an essentially anhydrous scavenger including an alkali metal silicate and zinc oxide and optionally from 0.01 to 1% by weight of an inert adjuvant, provided that the polymer has a water vapor transmission rate (WVTR) at least as high as that of low density polyethylene.
2. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 1, wherein the polymer includes low density polyethylene, polypropylene, ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, copolymers of lower C₂-C₈ olefins, copolymers of a lower C₂-C₈ olefin and ethylene/vinyl alcohol, non-biodegradable polyester, poly(vinyl chloride), polystyrene, or polyamide, or combinations thereof.
3. (Currently Amended) A tarnishing inhibiting composition comprising: a substantially non-hydrolyzable polymer having substantially homogeneously dispersed therein from about 0.01% to 5% by weight of an essentially anhydrous scavenger including an alkali metal silicate and zinc oxide and optionally an inert adjuvant, provided that the polymer has a water vapor transmission rate (WVTR) at least as high as that of low density polyethylene, and wherein said non-hydrolyzable polymer is a biodegradable polymer comprising a star ϵ -caprolactone; ϵ -caprolactone (PCL) (ϵ -PCL); poly(hydroxybutyrate-co-valerate) (PHBV); an uncoated- or nitrocellulose-coated cellophane film[[s]]; crosslinked chitosan; starch/ethylene vinyl alcohol (St/EVOH) blend film; pure EVOH film (38 mole percent ethylene); or polycaprolactone (PCL).
4. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 3, wherein the alkali metal silicate is a silicate of sodium.

5. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 21, including the adjuvant, wherein the adjuvant comprises calcium carbonate present in an amount of from 0.01% to 1% by weight, wherein said calcium carbonate has a primary particle size in the range from about 1 micron to 53 microns, and wherein said calcium carbonate is substantially homogeneously dispersed in said polymer.

6.-9. (Cancelled).

10. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 1, wherein the alkali metal silicate is a silicate of sodium.

11. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 10, wherein said silicate of sodium and said zinc oxide, independently, have a primary particle size in the range from about 1 μm to 53 μm .

12. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 11, wherein the total amount of said scavenger is from about 0.1% to about 3% by weight.

13. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 2, wherein the alkali metal silicate is a silicate of sodium, wherein the total amount of said scavenger is from about 0.1% to about 3% by weight.

14. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 13, wherein the primary particle size of said silicate of sodium and said zinc oxide, independently, is from about 1 μm to 53 μm .

15.- 19. (Cancelled).

20. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 4, wherein the total amount of said scavenger is from about 0.1% to 3.0% by weight.

21. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 20, wherein said silicate of sodium and said zinc oxide each, independently, have a primary particle size of from 1 to 53 microns.

22. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 1, said composition being capable of protecting a surface of a silver object containing in excess of 90% silver, when the surface is exposed to the composition in a sealed environment, against tarnishing in a molecular-oxygen containing atmosphere containing in the range from 1 ppb (parts per billion) to 10 ppm (parts per million) of hydrogen sulfide at a relative humidity of 90% and 37.4°C (100°F), for at least one year.

23. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 3, said composition being capable of protecting a surface of a silver object containing in excess of 90% silver, when the surface is exposed to the composition in a sealed environment, against tarnishing in a molecular-oxygen containing atmosphere containing in the range from 1 ppb (parts per billion) to 10 ppm (parts per million) of hydrogen sulfide at a relative humidity of 90% and 37.4°C (100°F), for at least one year.

24. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 21, said composition being capable of protecting a surface of a silver object containing in excess of 90% silver, when the surface is exposed to the composition in a sealed environment, against tarnishing in a molecular-oxygen containing atmosphere containing in the range from 1 ppb (parts per billion) to 10 ppm (parts per million) of hydrogen sulfide at a relative humidity of 90% and 37.4°C (100°F), for at least one year.

25. (Original) The composition of claim 12, including the adjuvant, wherein the adjuvant comprises calcium carbonate in an amount of from 0.01% to 1% by weight and having a primary particle size in the range of from about 1 micron to 53 microns.

26. (Original) The composition of claim 14, including the adjuvant, wherein the adjuvant comprises calcium carbonate in an amount of from 0.01% to 1% by weight and having a primary particle size in the range of from about 1 micron to 53 microns.

27. (Original) The composition of claim 3, wherein said composition consists essentially of said biodegradable polymer, said scavenger, and said inert adjuvant.